

Message Text

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ACTION OES-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 ACDA-12 CIAE-00 INR-07 IO-13
L-03 NSAE-00 EB-08 NRC-05 SOE-02 DODE-00 DOE-11
SS-15 SP-02 INRE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 PM-05 /103 W
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FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6082
INFO USMISSION USNATO PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY BONN PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L OTTAWA 00368

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: TSPA, NATO, UR, GW, CA
SUBJECT: RE-ENTRY OF SOVIET SATELLITE, COSMOS 954

1. COSMOS 954 HAVING COME TO EARTH ON CANADIAN SOIL, GOC
DECIDED TO SUMMON SOVIET AMBASSADOR TO DISCUSS THIS DEVE-
LOPMENT. ACCORDINGLY, EXTAFF ASSISTANT UNDER SECRETARY
J. H. TAYLOR RECEIVED AMBASSADOR YAKOVLEV AT 1630 ON
JANUARY 24, AND MADE FOLLOWING POINTS:

(A) AFTER REVIEWING EVENTS OF THE DAY, AND ALLUDING
TO TELEPHONIC CONTACT BETWEEN PRESIDENT CARTER AND PRIME
MINISTER TRUDEAU AS BASIS FOR PUBLIC STATEMENTS MADE IN
WASHINGTON AND OTTAWA, TAYLOR EXPRESSED "MILD COMPLAINT"
THAT USSR HAD NOT DIRECTLY INFORMED GOC IN ADVANCE ABOUT
POTENTIAL RE-ENTRY PROBLEM. (EMBASSY COMMENT: GOC IS
AWARE THAT SOVIETS WERE IN DIRECT CONTACT WITH FRG AND
SWEDEN. END COMMENT)

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(B) TAYLOR REMINDED YAKOVLEV THAT, UNDER INTERNATIONAL
CONVENTION, USSR MUST ACCEPT FULL LIABILITY FOR ANY DAM-
AGES. HE ADDED THAT PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING SIMILAR
EVENTS IN FUTURE SHOULD BE DISCUSSED IN AN APPROPRIATE
INTERNATIONAL FORUM, AND IN ANY CASE, GOC RESERVED THE
RIGHT TO RETURN TO THIS QUESTION.

(C) TAYLOR HANDED YAKOVLEV FOLLOWING QUESTIONS DEVELOPED BY ATOMIC ENERGY CONTROL BOARD, TO WHICH GOC REQUESTED URGENT RESPONSE:

-- (1) WHAT ARE CHARACTERISTICS OF SATELLITE POWER SOURCE?

-- (2) IF POWER SOURCE IS REACTOR, WHAT IS NATURE AND AMOUNT OF FUEL, WHAT CHEMICAL FORM DOES IT TAKE, WHAT ARE ITS DECAYING CHARACTERISTICS, ITS PHYSICAL DIMENSIONS, WAS ANY SHIELDING USED OR WAS IT IN ANY OTHER CONTAINER?

-- (3) IF THE SATELLITE HAD IMPACTED WITHIN USSR, WHAT CRITERIA WOULD GUIDE A SEARCH PARTY, FOR EXAMPLE, OVER HOW LARGE A GEOGRAPHIC AREA MIGHT DEBRIS BE SPREAD, WHAT WOULD BE SPECTRUM OF IONIZATION RADIATION, ETC.?

-- (4) CAN THE SOVIETS ESTIMATE THE LIKELY POINT OF IMPACT WITHIN CANADA?

2. EXTAFF SAID YAKOVLEV, IN RESPONSE INSISTED AS HE HAD WHEN SUMMONED THAT HIS FIRST INFORMATION ON SUBJECT WAS NEWS ITEM REPORTING THE RE-ENTRY, AND THAT HE HAD IMMEDIATELY SENT AN INQUIRY TO MOSCOW. HE PROMISED TO CONFIDENTIAL

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TRANSMIT THE TECHNICAL QUESTIONS AND BE IN TOUCH WITH EXTAFF AS SOON AS ANSWERS WERE RECEIVED. HE ALSO STATED THAT HE HAD NO KNOWLEDGE OF THE LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS INVOLVED. REFERRING TO THE BRZEZINSKI PRESS CONFERENCE, HE EXPRESSED SURPRISE AT THE DEGREE OF US/USSR CONSULTATION WHICH HAD TAKEN PLACE ON THIS SUBJECT. TO THIS FINAL POINT, TAYLOR REJOINED THAT IT WAS PRECISELY ON THESE GROUNDS THAT THE GOC BELIEVED IT HAD LEGITIMATE CAUSE FOR COMPLAINT TO THE USSR. DUEMLING

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